

Journal of Social Change

2014, Volume 6, Issue 1, Pages 86–108

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DOI: 10.5590/JOSC.2014.06.1.07

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The Will to Lead: The Dynamic Integration of Intrinsic Motivation and Social Change Leadership

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Discourse on the psychosocial substrates of human motivation reflects a hot-button theme in contemporary leadership research circles. For many aspiring leaders, role models and social support provide an undercurrent for instilling leadership attributes. Yet for others, the drive to optimize leadership potentials is a naturally occurring, internally guided event that is continually reinforced through self-regulatory processes. As such, questions remain as to which intrinsic motives underpin the leadership potentials that have implications for social change agency. To date, the extant literature fails to offer a comprehensive model that highlights (a) the self-motives that have preeminent applicability to intrinsic motivation, (b) the core ideals engendered by such motives, and (c) the linkages that exist between the core ideals and the leadership drives that underpin social change agency. In the following discussion, a theoretical framework is proposed that highlights seven well-documented theoretical constructs—self-determination, self-efficacy, self-worth, self-enhancement, self-affirmation, self-concordance, and self-actualization—and their overarching relevance to leadership potentials. Each of the aforementioned constructs engenders a corresponding motivational ideal—autonomy, competence, achievement, identity, integrity, congruence, and potentiation, respectively—that hypothetically aligns with one of the seven components of Astin and Astin's (1996) social change leadership model. Discussion underscores the need for a paradigm shift to enhance awareness of the extent to which specific intrinsic motives and their corresponding ideals have implications for the leadership orientations that underpin social change agency.

Keywords: *intrinsic motivation, leadership, self-motives, social change*

Introduction

Historical perspectives on human motivation suggest that drives—the causal agents of action—are a complex derivative of biology, instinct, and tension reduction (Hull, 1935; Seward, 1956). At the organismic level, humans become aroused by environmental cues and subsequently elicit a neurochemical cascade that initiates sympathetic nervous system activation (Cannon, 1932; Selye, 1956). It is this feedback mechanism that signals internal discord and ultimately motivates individuals to seek a means of achieving homeostatic balance (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908). At the psychological level, disparities between facts and stringently held beliefs can cause cognitive distress that consequently motivates individuals to reconcile the gap between opinion and truth (Festinger, 1957).

By contrast, behaviorists shifted the paradigm to the external schema, revealing the potency of contextual incentives for eliciting desired outcomes (Skinner, 1953). Given the tendency of humans

to selectively manage drive resources for purposes of energy allocation (Pritchard & Ashwood, 2008), Maslow (1968, 1970) argued that needs are satisfied along a physiological-to-psychological continuum: from those that are most essential to survival (i.e., physiological) to those that are integral to achieving an idealized self (i.e., psychological). Integrative theories of motivation, such as those that focus on achievement (McClelland, 1953), attribution (Heider, 1944; Weiner, 1986), and goal setting (Locke, 1968), highlight the human orientation toward the maintenance of cognitive and affective homeostasis—leaving individuals perhaps unaware of their role in determining the most viable means of achieving a psychological steady state.

In the leadership paradigm, it is not always a question of how leaders affect change, but a question of which mechanisms orient leaders toward goal pursuits—a phenomenon that is grounded in both characterological and contextual factors (Chatzisarantis, Kee, Thaung, & Hagger, 2012; Johnstone & Manica, 2011). For those who seek to affect change, leadership aspirations may represent the most ambitious of life challenges: The conception, design, and implementation of such initiatives requires a complex combination of higher order cognition, bias-free objectivity, and an enduring level of commitment to affecting positive social impacts (Eng, 2009). As such, questions remain as to the potency of intrinsic (i.e., internally emergent) versus extrinsic (i.e., externally emergent) motives (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000) for leadership goal orientation and, more specifically, for determining whether either motive type has greater potential for aspiring leaders to sustain adherence to their targeted goal path.

Despite the utility of extrinsic motives when attempting to avert threat or punishment (Deci & Ryan, 2000), evidence shows such motives to fail to promote prolonged adherence to mission objectives (Wright, Moynihan, & Pandey, 2012). Extending this view, leaders who target performance (i.e., extrinsic) goals are less apt to communicate and disseminate knowledge than leaders who target mastery (i.e., intrinsic) goals (Poortvliet, Janssen, Van Yperen, & Van de Vliert, 2007). In addition, drives that emanate from internal sources are more reflective of one's personal value base, general interest, and genuine appreciation for an activity (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Further, an overreliance on extrinsic motivators is potentially counterproductive (Deci, 1971), as leaders may experience decreases in perceived power that eventually subvert innate motivational drives (Bénabou & Tirole, 2003). In such instances, external motivators only provide a short-term bridge between intention and action—thus, failing to promote the meaningful, sustained pursuit of goals.

Unlike the extrinsic drive to avoid stimuli that represent challenge (Gagné & Deci, 2005), intrinsically motivated goal pursuits have been correlated to potentiation perceptions, internalized behaviors, and activities that engender a balance between challenge and ability (Carbonneau, Vallerand, & Lafrenière, 2012; Waterman, 2005; Waterman, Schwartz, & Conti, 2008)—many of the inherent attributes of social change agency (Astin & Astin, 1996). For intrinsically motivated leaders, goal attainment challenges are often perceived as enjoyable, rich in experiential learning opportunities, significantly linked to creativity factors, but not perceived as arduous tasks (Kwok, Tingting, & Guoquan, 2012). As with extrinsic motivational drives, intrinsic motives are significantly linked to characterological factors (Achakul & Yolles, 2013) and are profoundly susceptible to change throughout the course of development (Covington, 2000; Covington & Müeller, 2001; Hayenga & Corpus, 2010).

Cross-cultural studies on intrinsic motivation reveal various psychosocial substrates, including but not limited to optimism (Yun-Jeong & Kelly, 2013), work ethic (Fakhar Zaman, Nas, Ahmed, Raja, & Khan Marri, 2013), and racial identity (Byrd & Chavous, 2011). Intrinsic motivation has been widely implicated in decision-making processes (Kudadjie-Gyamfi, 2006) and has predictive utility for intentions and behavior (Chatzisarantis, Hagger, Smith, & Sage, 2006). Positive affect, personality, and context have been causally linked to intrinsic motivation for deriving knowledge and enhancing achievement drives (Carbonneau et al., 2012; Folbre, 2012; Isen & Reeve, 2005). Further, adaptive and creative aptitudes have been causally linked to psychological balance and authentic satisfaction—driving forces of intrinsic motivation and leadership orientation (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Yet despite evidence that unequivocally highlights the potency of intrinsic motivation for sustained adherence to goal pursuits, the extant literature fails to highlight which internal motives possess the greatest relevance to leadership potential.

In an effort to bridge this evidentiary gap, the following discussion serves to align (a) the constructs of seven well-documented psychological theories of motivation, (b) the core ideals of said theories, and (c) their associated leadership attributes into a proposed theoretical framework for social change leadership. First, discussion will focus on the relevance of the following constructs to intrinsic motivation and leadership: self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977a; 1982, 1997), self-worth (Covington & Beery, 1976; Covington, 1984), self-enhancement (Shrauger, 1975), self-affirmation (Steele, 1988), self-concordance (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999), and self-actualization (Maslow, 1968 1970). Next, each of the aforementioned constructs contains a central ideal (i.e., autonomy, competence, achievement, identity, integrity, congruence, potentiation) that will be aligned with one of the following components of the social change leadership model (Astin & Astin, 1996), respectively: commitment, collaboration, common purpose, consciousness of self, controversy with civility, congruence, and citizenship. Finally, discussion underscores the enduring value of intrinsic drives to social change agency—and the overarching need to orient and empower future leaders to acknowledge the potency of self-motives as a mechanism of leadership aptitude development.

Theoretical Framework

In the following section, seven self-motives—self-determination, self-efficacy, self-worth, self-enhancement, self-affirmation, self-concordance, and self-actualization—are highlighted with respect to their function within the scheme of intrinsic motivation. Figure 1 shows the proposed theoretical framework that highlights each self-motive and its associated conceptual ideal.



Figure 1: *The seven intrinsic self-motives and their associated conceptual ideals.*

Self-Determination

Self-determination is a form motivation that is exclusively activated by intrinsic, not extrinsic, stimuli (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to Deci and Ryan (1985), self-determined individuals are driven by three primary needs: (a) to be a causal agent of life outcomes (i.e., autonomy), (b) to engender mastery over specific skills (i.e., competence), and (c) to experience a sense of connectivity with others (i.e., relatedness). With regard to change agency, personal volition has been shown to significantly moderate perceived autonomy over outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2000) and has implications for eudaimonic living (Ryan, Huta, & Deci, 2008). Here, enhanced achievement perceptions that occur as a result of goal attainment can subsequently enhance the sense of autonomy (i.e., “I am an agent of my outcomes”) that drives sustained adherence toward goal pursuits (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Hagger and Chatzisarantis (2009) revealed significant linkages between perceived autonomy support and attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and intentionality (Ajzen, 1991). Self-determination theory has been employed in the theoretical frameworks of leadership research, elucidating the extent to which self-determined drives catalyze either autonomy or control orientations throughout the leadership development process (Solansky, 2012). For purposes of this discussion, *autonomy* will be highlighted as the foundational ideal associated with self-determination.

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is the perception held by individuals that they possess the competencies required to attain targeted goals (Bandura, 1977a). Bandura (1982, 1997) argued that self-efficacy is influenced through four primary mechanisms. First, experience dictates the perception held by individuals that they could either succeed at or fail to achieve their goals (Bandura, 1982, 1997). Next, individuals tend to model and ultimately adopt the behaviors that they deem desirable in others (Bandura, 1982, 1997). Further, it is through persuasion that individuals tend to affiliate with others whom they believe will enhance their self-efficacy for specific outcomes (Bandura, 1982, 1997).

Finally, internal (i.e., physiological) events act as alerts that signal the presence of perceived threats, which consequently induce an adaptive or maladaptive response to such threats (Bandura, 1982, 1997). While self-efficacy is impacted by subjective wellbeing across the lifespan (Caprara & Steca, 2005), developmental perspectives suggest that self-efficacy beliefs and behavior are increasingly correlated with advancing age (Davis-Kean et al., 2008). In leadership research, self-efficacy has been significantly linked to relational identification (Walumbwa & Hartnell, 2011), commitment intensity (Strauss, Griffin, & Rafferty, 2009), and trust in leadership (Liu, Siu, & Shi, 2010). For purposes of this discussion, competence will be highlighted as the foundational ideal associated with self-efficacy.

Self-Worth

Self-worth refers to the overall value that individuals attribute to themselves (Covington & Beery, 1976; Covington, 1984). A manifestation of self-concept, self-worth is significantly related to self-esteem, competitiveness, and personal achievement (Covington, 1984). In addition, perceptions of effort (i.e., diligence) and ability (i.e., talent) are fundamentally linked to self-worth perceptions (Covington, 1984). However, individuals may experience decreases in self-worth in the event that they fail to replicate specific accomplishments, or if such accomplishments were achieved as a result of social support (Covington, 1984). Evidence shows individuals who exhibit high levels of collective self-esteem to strive to increase their self-worth perceptions for purposes achieving ingroup acceptance (Verkuyten, 1997).

Individuals will go to great lengths to preserve perceptions of accomplishment—to the extent of choosing to engage in behaviors that ensure success (Covington, 1984). As such, achievement and ability are inextricably linked (Covington, 1984), and have implications for the psychosocial factors that impact perceived accomplishment. Further, self-worth has been significantly associated with perceived control, group identity, innovation, creativity, openness toward learning, and transformational leadership (Crabtree, Haslam, Postmes, & Haslam, 2010; Hickman, 2006; McCoy, Wellman, Cosley, Saslow, & Epel, 2013; Rank, Nelson, Allen, & Xian, 2009). For purposes of this discussion, achievement will be highlighted as the foundational ideal associated with self-worth.

Self-Enhancement

Self-enhancement refers to efforts to maintain adequate levels of perceived self-acceptability despite threats to self-concept (Shrauger, 1975). Like self-worth, self-enhancement is fundamentally related to self-esteem and is primarily driven by the desire to perceive oneself in a positive light (Sedikides & Gregg, 2008; Sedikides & Strube, 1995). Like its self-assessment, self-improvement, and self-verification counterparts, self-enhancement is a form of self-evaluation that is guided by the self-regulatory response (Sedikides, 1993). Despite the tendency of individuals to engage in social self-evaluations as a means of enhancing their self-concept (Festinger, 1954), different evaluation approaches are employed by individuals with high (i.e., self-aggrandizing) or low (i.e., self-protecting) levels of self-esteem (Sedikides & Strube, 1995).

For many individuals, internally held biases may lead to the erroneous attribution of successful outcomes to dispositional traits and failed outcomes to state factors (Mezulis, Abramson, Hyde, & Hankin, 2004)—a critical consideration for aspiring leaders given the overarching value of objective perception. In addition, self-enhancement has been positively associated with indicators of psychosocial adjustment, with decreased self-esteem observed to significantly impact the capacity for psychosocial adaptation (Dufner et al., 2012). The self-enhancement efforts of leaders are often guided by morals and ego (Lönnqvist, Paunonen, Nissinen, Ortju, & Verkasalo, 2011), and are significantly linked to challenge persistence and subjective wellbeing (Sedikides, Horton, & Gregg, 2007). For purposes of this discussion, identity will be highlighted as the foundational ideal associated with self-enhancement.

Self-Affirmation

Self-affirmation refers to efforts to maintain perceptions of an adequate level of personal integrity (Steele, 1988). In instances of perceived threat, positive self-affirmations serve to cultivate attitudes of open mindedness regarding the stressor (Pietersma & Dijkstra, 2011). Morality and ethics are integral to self-affirmation and are grounded in sociocultural ideals (Steele, 1988). Inextricably linked to self-esteem, self-worth, and self-concept, self-affirming cognitions and behaviors permit individuals to re-establish perceived integrity while avoiding an arousal of the defense mechanisms that induce maladaptive biases (Steele, 1988). While perceived threats to integrity and moral code can occur at both the individual (e.g., beliefs, identity) and interpersonal (e.g., relationships) levels, research on high self-esteem individuals showed a significantly greater possession of affirmational assets when compared to individuals with low self-esteem (Steele, 1997).

Given its linkages to cognitive and affective flexibility (Blanton, Cooper, Skurnik, & Aronson, 1997), evidence reveals self-affirmation to be an adaptive method of coping and self-regulation when confronted with adverse circumstances (Murray, Bellavia, Feeney, Holmes, & Rose, 2001; Sherman & Cohen, 2006). Although self-affirmation can have predictive utility for specific behaviors, its impact is contingent upon the type of behavior and the values associated with such behavior (Pietersma & Dijkstra, 2011). Evidence reveals self-affirmation to play a self-protective role when reconciling cognitive self-threats (Bergstrom, Neighbors, & Malheim, 2009)—a potential defense mechanism that promotes the degree of resilience and self-confidence that is often integral to leadership aptitudes (Dennis, 2014). For purposes of this discussion, integrity will be highlighted as the foundational ideal associated with self-affirmation.

Self-Concordance

Self-concordance reflects the capacity of individuals to maintain directedness toward their deep interests and ambitions—orientations that are often collectively referred to as their true self (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999). As a result of the highly personal nature of self-concordant motives, the behaviors adopted as a result of such drives are more likely to be maintained and ultimately sustained for a desired duration (Sheldon & Houser-Marko, 2001). Goals that are self-endorsed—that is, those that are congruent with one's self-identity—have been shown to possess greater meaning and purpose, and thus result in enhanced subjective wellbeing when achieved (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999).

Inextricably linked to the autonomy, competence, and relatedness ideals of self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000), goals must possess self-concordant value in order to enhance wellbeing; if goals lack self-concordant value, subjective wellbeing typically remains unchanged (Ryan, 2000). Vasalampi, Salmela-Aro, and Nurmi (2009) proposed a linear sequence that highlights the impact of self-concordant motives on subjective wellbeing: (a) goal self-concordance drives goal effort, (b) goal effort drives goal progress, and (c) goal progress drives enhancements in wellbeing. Further, evidence shows that leaders who possess self-concordant orientations also possess an enhanced potential for goal attainment, life satisfaction, and citizenship behavior (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2010). For purposes of this discussion, coherence will be highlighted as the foundational ideal associated with self-concordance.

Self-Actualization

Self-actualization refers to the process that individuals undertake when striving toward their optimal potential (Maslow, 1962, 1970). Creative, spiritual, intellectual, and social pursuits are manifestations of the desire of individuals to self-actualize (Maslow, 1962, 1970). As delineated in his hierarchy of needs, Maslow (1970) discussed self-actualization as the final step in a progressive sequence of personal potentiation. Here, a self-actualized state can only be attained if physiological (i.e., air, food, water, sex, sleep, homeostasis, excretion) and psychological (i.e., safety, love, belongingness, esteem) needs have been satiated (Maslow, 1962, 1970). According to Maslow (1962, 1970), elements of idealism, introspection, self-discovery, and the quest for life purpose reflect emergent themes that are commonly associated with the self-actualization process.

As a buffer for the cognitive and affective challenges engendered by personal exploration, Cohen and Cairns (2012) found self-actualization to have a positive moderating effect on the search for personal meaning in life. For leaders, goal attainability perceptions have been shown to moderate the perceptions of goal importance and success (Conrad, Doering, Rief, & Exner, 2010)—factors that are presumably associated with the self-actualization process. As fundamental elements of leadership, self-esteem, competence, and confidence are elemental to self-actualization (Maslow, 1962, 1970) and have been shown to have predictive utility for achievement and subjective wellbeing (Conrad et al., 2010). For purposes of this discussion, potentiation will be highlighted as the foundational ideal self-actualization.

Social Change Model of Leadership Development

According to Astin and Astin (1996), the cultivation of core values—specifically, those that promote the wellbeing of the collective—is integral to the development of social change orientations in leaders (Figure 2). By acknowledging the myriad beliefs that underlie intrinsic motives, enacting self-concordant behaviors, and applying a focused effort toward mutual goals, aspiring leaders can enhance their consciousness of self, sense of congruence, and level of commitment, respectively (Astin & Astin, 1996). In addition, establishing intergroup trust, identifying a shared vision, and embracing an enduring respect for interindividual differences promotes the ideals of collaboration, common purpose, and controversy with civility in future leaders, respectively (Astin & Astin, 1996).

Finally, through an increased exposure to the vast array of attitudes, beliefs, and values catalyzed by intergroup dynamics, an enhanced interest and concern for the broader community is engendered—thus orienting individuals toward practices that promote citizenship (Astin & Astin, 1996). As individualist values transform into collectivist ideals, a paradigm shift occurs; future change agents become less inclined to cultivate self-knowledge as a means of self-aggrandizement and more inclined to apply such knowledge as a mechanism of social change leadership orientation. The components of Astin and Astin’s (1996) social change model of leadership development (Figure 2) will be discussed in detail in the following section.

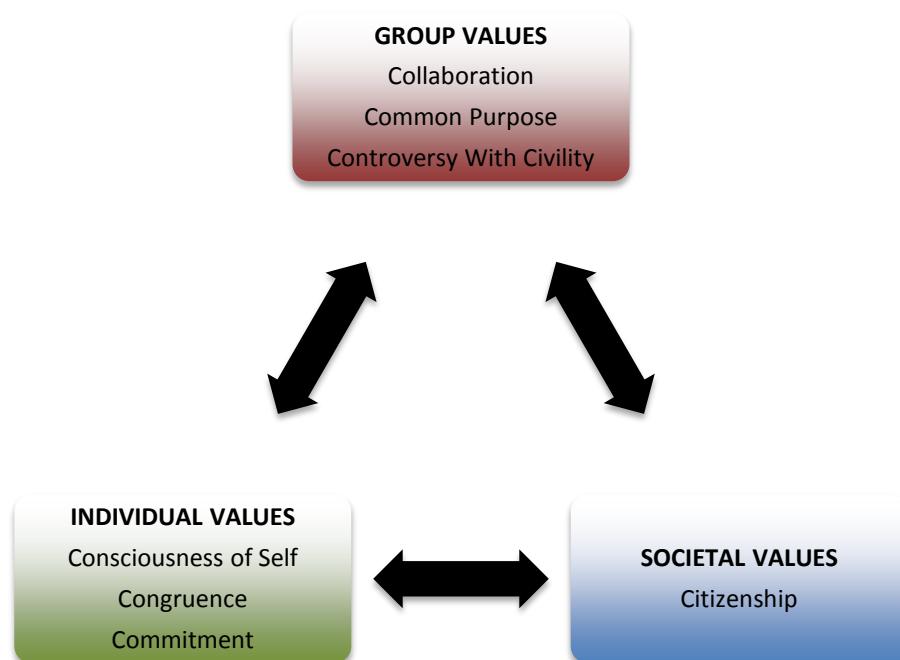


Figure 2: *The social change model of leadership development. Adapted from “Leadership for Social Change,” by H. S. Astin, 1996, About Campus, 1, pp. 4–10. Copyright 1996. Adapted with permission.*

Intrinsic Motivation Ideals and Social Change Leadership: Linkages and Implications

The extant literature elucidates linkages between intrinsic motivational ideals and various attributes of social change agency. In the following section, seven ideals of intrinsic motivation—autonomy, competence, achievement, identity, integrity, congruence, and potentiation—are discussed in relation a corresponding component of the social change leadership model (Astin & Astin, 1996).

Autonomy and Commitment

Autonomy is reflected in the degree of desire, directedness, and commitment exhibited by individuals when engaging in goal pursuits (Astin & Astin, 1996). With regard to goal directedness, evidence shows autonomous individuals to possess high levels of initiative, persistence, and resourcefulness (Ponton & Carr, 2000). In addition, competency perceptions only increase intrinsic motivation when such perceptions are associated with autonomy experiences and internalized causal attributions (Ryan & Deci, 2000). A decreased reliance on external motivators has been correlated to a higher locus of control over future outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Rotter, 1966), leading to an enhanced degree of independence, accountability, and sustained motivation for goal pursuits (Stone, Deci, & Ryan, 2009).

Autonomy perceptions upheld by leaders have been shown to dramatically impact the level of commitment to social objectives experienced by members (Sisodia & Das, 2013)—a view that has implications for the perceived effectiveness of the leader. Findings reported by Brunetto, Farr-Wharton, and Shacklock (2011) revealed the communication quality and role definition clarity provided by leaders to positively impact the commitment level exhibited by members. Choice, freewill, and autonomy-supportive environments have been shown to promote the self-determined autonomy experiences that underpin causal agency over outcomes (Chatzisarantis et al., 2012; Katz & Assor, 2007; Ryan & Deci, 2006)—findings that have profound implications for the creative vision manifested through successful leadership efforts.

Competence and Collaboration

A central component of human motivation, self-efficacy is manifested in choices, thought patterns, productivity levels, and self-protective behaviors (Bandura, 1977b; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005). In general, self-efficacious leaders exhibit the confidence to embrace, not avoid, task demands and an enhanced need for task mastery and challenge orientation versus those who lack self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993). Competency perceptions are often derived through observational learning (e.g., life experience), which serves to shape the confidence dispositions that reinforce challenge approach tendencies (Bandura, 1988). For leaders who strive to instill prosocial ideals, collaborative efforts have implications for experiential learning, mutual empowerment, and interpersonal trust (Astin & Astin, 1996)—factors that not only enrich skill competencies but, through exposure to diverse perspectives, engender a universal respect for individual differences.

Through collaboration, leaders enhance competence perceptions by facilitating social bonds, indoctrinating coalition mentalities, and embracing and applying constructive feedback (Astin & Astin, 1996). Given competence praise as a moderator of intrinsic motivation (Corpus, Ogle, & Love-Geiger, 2006), leaders are not only implicitly obligated to provide such praise to members, but to

orient them to internalize and apply critical feedback as means of reinforcing competency self-perceptions. Given the idea of competence as a manifestation of knowledge sharing (Vanhaverbeke, Gilsing, & Duysters, 2012), such a view has implications for social change agency—specifically, that competence is derived through a collaborative, bidirectional exchange of information between multiple agents that can promote coalition development. As leaders strive to promote competency perceptions in their constituents, doing so often requires the dynamic integration of values that are cultivated through collaborative synergy (Meadan & Monda-Amaya, 2008).

Achievement and Common Purpose

Covington (1984) posited the notion that individuals will go to great lengths to mask perceived inadequacies in an effort to avoid humiliation or shame. Effort and intellect have been shown to have a mediative impact on achievement perceptions; in addition, achievement perceptions have been shown to moderate self-worth (Covington, 1984). As such, an inability to replicate prior success can have a negative impact on achievement perceptions and, thus, skew perceptions of self-efficacy (Covington, 1984). When group members exert concerted efforts toward a common purpose, they possess an enhanced aptitude for problem solving—arriving at mutually beneficial decisions that can potentially yield a mutually desirable result (Astin & Astin, 1996).

From a sociocultural perspective, leaders and members who have internalized a common purpose have ongoing opportunities to engage in goal-centered dialogue that stimulates critical thinking, enhances skill proficiency, and leads to the indoctrination new perspectives that enhance achievement potentials (Levine & Marcus, 2007). Similarly, the pursuit of a common purpose between leaders and members tends to intensify a collective passion for the cause, thus enhancing goal attainment efforts (Astin & Astin, 1996). Despite the extent to which motivational profiles are subject to change over the life span (Hayenga & Corpus, 2010), the learning potential afforded by failure is perhaps inestimable for leaders, with efforts to avoid failure deemed “illusory, since their repeated use will finally destroy the will to learn” (Covington, 1984, p. 12, para. 1).

Identity and Consciousness of Self

The tendency to engage in self-enhancing behavior is often driven by a desire for continuity, esteem, efficacy, and personal meaning—fundamental constructs of self-identity (Vignoles, Regalia, Manzi, Golledge, & Scabini, 2006). Waterman (2004) argued that self-expressiveness is integral to identity formation, which, in turn, guides the skill competencies and goal drives that underpin leadership orientations throughout all stages of development (Elliot & Dweck, 2005). In the group context, uncertainty reduction drives the self-protective thoughts and behaviors that promote positive subjective perceptions and self-identity (Hogg, 2000). Further, self-enhancement orientations have cross-cultural implications, with differential conceptions of self-identity observed across individualist and collectivist milieus (Sedikides, Gaertner, & Toguchi, 2003).

For leaders, identity formation—and the capacity to remain introspective throughout identity development—is perhaps an ever evolving process. As consciousness of self and group identity continually intersect, leaders establish revised self-definitions (e.g., negotiator, facilitator, strategist, agent) that can significantly influence their goal orientations (Ellemers, De Gilder, & Haslam, 2004). Evidence shows leaders who develop a heightened self-identity awareness are more apt to remain open to the leadership styles of others (Astin & Astin, 1996). In addition, Nauta (2007) posited that identity is often a byproduct of one’s desire for affiliation with like others and is strongly linked to

ingroup/outgroup selection. Here, a plausible supposition emerges: As consciousness of self manifests throughout development, leaders perhaps become more inclined to avoid antisocial behaviors that impede goal attainability and exert efforts toward establishing prosocial, collaborative relationships that appreciably contribute to the knowledge base and, more so, to sustained collective wellbeing.

Integrity and Controversy With Civility

Given the human tendency to interpret threats to integrity in self-protective ways (Sherman & Cohen, 2006), intrinsic drives that serve to defend ego and identity have evolutionary implications. In an effort to protect the timeworn beliefs that underpin self-integrity, defense mechanisms emerge (e.g., “I am good, upstanding, virtuous ...”)—despite objective evidence that signifies the need for more realistic self-perceptions (Sherman & Cohen, 2002). Here, self-esteem has been shown to have a moderating effect on self-affirming tendencies, with a negative correlation observed between higher levels of self-esteem and the need to self-justify (Holland, Meertens, & van Vugt, 2002). It is through this drive to maintain self-integrity that an ideological axiom emerges: For members to maintain loyalty to their leader, the leader must possess an unwavering belief in their values, their vision, and their capacity to enact change.

In the leadership paradigm, leaders and members represent a relationally agonistic, reciprocally reinforcing, and mutually constructive dynamism (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). However, contained within this framework are myriad implications for controversy and relational disparity. When undesirable leadership decisions are met with psychosocial resistance by members, the manner in which leaders address their constituents (e.g., with concern, authenticity, validation) significantly influences the extent to which matters can be handled with civility (Yunus, Ishak, Raja Mustapha, & Othman, 2010). Integrity driven, emotionally intelligent leaders who act with a sense of moral consistency and virtue tend to engage in ethically grounded problem solving and decision-making behaviors that preserve the collective morale (Astin & Astin, 1996; Yunus et al., 2010). Thus, civil outcomes are contingent upon the level of respect upheld for leaders and the extent to which members trust in their ability to successfully guide objectives (Graham, 2001).

Coherence and Congruence

From a leadership perspective, the identification of signature strengths reflects the ability to identify and utilize innate resources (Burke & Linley, 2007). Therefore, the capacity for leaders to establish and adhere to self-concordant goals is moderated by their capacity to remain aligned with—and to not deviate from—their true path (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999). Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, and Schkade (2005) extended such views to the biopsychosocial substrates of the pursuit of happiness, positing the idea that when combined, genetics, cognition (i.e., optimism), and contextual factors are integral to maintaining self-concordant orientations. In the leadership domain, value congruence between leaders and members has profound implications for work ethic and adherence to a common cause (Ren, 2010). The values of adaptability, autonomy, creativity, development, fairness, initiative, openness, and moral integrity are highly contributive to group wellbeing when experienced congruently among leaders and members (Sagnak, 2005).

Evidence shows that motive-goal congruence—that is, the alignment of drives and intended outcomes—has significant predictive utility for goal adherence and global wellbeing (Astin & Astin, 1996; Baumann, Kaschel, & Kuhl, 2005). For leaders, promoting value congruence and maintaining a coherent vision with members reinforces group satisfaction, commitment, and global performance

(Zhang, Wang, & Shi, 2012). If leaders and members embrace ideologically congruent motives, relationship stability and satisfaction can be significantly enhanced (Hagemeyer, Neberich, Asendorpf, & Neyer, 2013). In addition, value congruence was viewed as a motivational driver of goal directedness and as an essential element of transformational leadership (Bono & Judge, 2003). Here, if values are intrinsic and identified, not extrinsic and introjected, leaders are more likely to initiate and sustain goal pursuits (Sheldon, 2002).

Potentiality and Citizenship

In light of Maslow's (1962, 1970) primordial views on human drives, humans seek to satisfy needs in chronological sequence—first, to survive and, subsequently, to thrive. Rogers (1961) described the human aspiration to work to one's potential, as a "man's tendency to actualize himself, to become his potentialities" (p. 351, para 1). Fundamentally, this view is widely associated with self-concordance (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999), as self-satisfaction has been observed to decrease dramatically when self-selected goals and behaviors contradict true desires (Schacter, Gilbert, & Wegner, 2011). While elements of commitment and engagement are salient themes in the leader–member paradigm, meaningfulness—as a mechanism of volition—has been highly correlated to intrinsic leadership drives (Chalofsky & Krishna, 2009).

As leaders continually optimize their citizenship aptitudes, they are called upon to nurture and develop the service potentials of those they lead. Gunavathy and Indumathi (2011) argued for leaders to not simply aspire to enhance the task satisfaction and commitment of members to the initiative, but to facilitate the positive leader–member exchanges that promote citizenship orientations. By virtue of their role as administrators, leaders must direct members to identify, examine, and ultimately apply their citizenship skills to enhance the welfare of the greater community (Astin & Astin, 1996). Here, role identification (e.g., "I am a community supporter") and perceived resourcefulness (e.g., "I have the skills to promote change within my community") are considered critical to the development of citizenship aptitudes (Rubin, Dierdorff, & Bachrach, 2013). Finally, leaders who operate from a place of authenticity have been shown to be more open to change and tend to experience a greater likelihood of achieving their goals, earning member trust, and progressing along the self-actualization continuum (Kasser, 2002; Sheldon & Kasser, 2001; Vittersø, 2004).

Discussion

Given the challenges inherent to achievement pursuits, the goal attainment process is often akin to a "spiral pattern of change" (Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross, 1992, p. 1104, para. 6). Implied here is the idea that even calculated incremental steps toward the attainment of goal could be thwarted by a plethora of unanticipated barriers that result in regressions and progressions. With leadership performance fundamentally linked to autonomy, mastery, and emotional regulation (Chatzisarantis et al., 2012; Strauss et al., 2009; Turner, Goodin, & Lokey, 2012), social change leaders are encouraged to continually explore their intrinsic motivations—first, to better understand the mechanisms that drive their self-identity, and to then become more competent and masterful at promoting collaboration and interdependence within the collective (Ospina, 2010). As leaders of today draw from the experiences of their predecessors (Christens & Dolan, 2011), their capacity to understand their internal motivation constellation is transformative—and, thus, drives their will to lead social change objectives.

Throughout their development, leaders have many opportunities to hone and apply the critical thinking skills that are widely associated with leadership as they deconstruct problems, deduce viable solutions, and apply strategic principles in an effort to induce meaningful change (Gantz et al., 2012). Given the profound influence of context on learning (Bandura, 1977b, 1988), self-worth, self-enhancement, and self-affirmation each possess profound social overtones (Covington, 1984)—a view that has implications for the extent to which elements of the social condition will continue to impact the ability of leaders to affect social influence. While social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook possess viable potential for leadership development and positive social change (Kozinets, Belz, & McDonagh, 2012; Sweetser & Kelleher, 2011), they conversely possess the potential to undermine self-concept and, thus, the attitudes and beliefs that underpin leadership behavior (Agrifoglio, Black, Metallo, & Ferrara, 2012; Toma & Hancock, 2013). As such epistemologies continue to evolve, questions emerge as to how the digital age will continue to moderate consciousness of self and, moreover, self-concept.

As leaders strive to maintain a sense of self-integrity when promoting their self-identified values and ideals, their efforts to establish goals and objectives for the collective should not be a solitary mission—instead, it should be a mutually defined process that is reflective of a cohesive, shared vision among leaders and members. For young adult members, value formation is manifested through discourse on social issues, access to trusted mentors, and involvement in community initiatives (Dugan & Komives, 2010; Selesho, 2014)—experiences that, through direct exposure to the prosocial influences, instill the value of collaboration as a fundamental ideal of social change orientation. Experientially, the opportunity for young members to participate in communal change efforts has critical implications for learning and awareness—of both self and others. In addition, such experiences not only have the potential to influence the extent to which those members will validate the authenticity of the leader, but commit to the cause. By embracing a universal sense of purpose, leaders and members can enhance their collective orientation toward change.

As leaders develop and apply moral values, adhere to ethical codes of conduct, negotiate complex challenges, and maintain an enduring interest in prosocial causes, self-actualizing tendencies are potentiated (Eng, 2009; MacLagan, 2003). Here, the idea of leadership potential is perhaps most accurately conceptualized as a synergistic, all-encompassing experience—one that not only results from a culmination of achievements, but from continued adaptation to the ever changing needs of the social condition. From this perspective, the idea of self-actualization as having a finite end point is debatable; arguments have been established that frame self-actualization as an ideal that cannot be completed or satisfied (Maslow, 1968, 1970). Therefore, leaders may conceive of self-actualization not as a goal to be achieved, but as an ongoing process that is infinitely subject to transient psychological states, social engagement, and human evolution (Levine & Marcus, 2007)—factors that invariably influence the meaningful and enduring contribution of leaders to positive social change.

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